

**Update of the Tourism Workforce Development Strategic Plan
Presented to the Board of Director of the Hawaii Tourism Authority**

**By Walter Jamieson, Dean, School of Travel Industry Management
University of Hawaii-Manoa**

February 1, 2007

The Tourism Workforce Development Strategic Plan project addresses workforce development needs articulated in the Hawaii Tourism Authority's **Tourism Strategic Plan 2005-2015**. The 18-month project is scheduled for March 1, 2006 through August 31, 2007.

The current status of work on the major initiatives of the project are as follows:

1. *Design and deliver training to meet immediate needs*

The training priorities were selected by the project's advisory board from a short list that was based on stakeholder feedback received in meetings on Kauai, Oahu, Maui, and the Big Island, and from one-to-one discussions. The priorities for each county are:

- a. Hawaii County- (Hilo, Kona) – Revive, promote, and implement certified host culture program for tour guide drivers
- b. Honolulu - Expand delivery of Interpret Hawaii course in customer service
- c. Kauai County – Customize Kauai Community School's work-readiness curriculum to prepare students specifically for visitor industry occupational training
- d. Maui County – Integrate customer service and host culture training in a single program that is standardized and certified throughout the industry

We are working with Kapiolani Community College as the lead agency to coordinate the delivery of training to Hawaii County, Maui County, and Honolulu. KCC has submitted a proposal, and we are in the process of refining that proposal to ensure that it meets the needs of the project.

We are also working with the Kauai Branch, Workforce Development Division, Department of Labor & Industrial Relations, on supporting a planned program on "Labor Pool Expansion - Leisure and Hospitality Industry Career Exploration. Other partners in this initiative are the Southshore Workforce Development Project, Kaua'i Community School for Adults, and One-Stop Career Center.

2. *Develop a database of essential workforce planning information*

Recently completed employment-related reports have been reviewed for relevance to the Tourism Workforce Development Strategic Plan, including the **Hawaii Construction Workforce Action Plan** completed for the Department of Labor and

Industrial Relations by the Hawaii Institute for Public Affairs in July which is industry-specific as is HTA's plan. Project staff will ensure that HTA's methodology and analysis are consistent with other state-sponsored plans to maximize use in policy planning. Data collection and analysis have been ongoing and the strategic plan issues have been identified. Project staff is currently developing a timeline and matrix for initiatives prioritized by the stakeholder groups.

3. *Develop collaborative projects to build capacity*

The stakeholder meetings held across the state to identify training priorities also produced much discussion on the need to initiate or supplement collaboration among organizations to leverage resources and reduce overlap. This information is being compiled and will be presented to the Advisory Group for review and comment. However, it is clear that there are ideal opportunities for collaboration involving the State Department of Education. These opportunities have emerged not only from the stakeholder meetings but also from a previous study performed for the HTA on the Academy of Hospitality and Tourism program. We will be developing several initiatives in this area with input from HTA, DOE, and other agencies, for consideration by the Advisory Group.

4. *Develop a stakeholder-led process for creating and evaluating the workforce plan*

Results of the recent workshop "The Future of Tourism in Hawaii" held on October 24, 2006 at the East-West Center are still being compiled by the organizer. As soon as those results are received, we will review them and incorporate them into the Strategic Plan, as appropriate.

The draft Strategic Plan is well underway, and the initial draft of the plan narrative has been completed except for the economic and employment analysis section. This section should be completed in draft form by Mr. Robert Lucas, a labor economist, by the end of February. Soon after, we will begin the process of public review and input.

Project Staff

Ms. Dietra Myers Tremblay has been hired effective January 12, 2007. Dietra has been working for the TIM Applied Research unit since July 2006 on a part-time basis, and has both academic and professional experience in tourism research and planning. Her immediate tasks will be to work with KCC and the DOE in implementing the identified training, and to oversee the development of capacity building projects, particularly with the DOE.